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AUTHOR Klein, Joan S.
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ABSTRACT

The 3R program at Highland Park Junior High School (St. Paul, Minnesota) serves seventh to ninth grade students with maladaptive behavior from 1 to 3 hours daily with the purpose of facilitating eventual return to all or nearly all regular classes. Student time in the classroom is totally individualized. The treatment plan involves a behavior monitoring and reinforcement plan which includes an overall point system, use of contracts, and social and concrete reinforcers. The behavior management system consists of three steps: (1) setting up an environment which avoids generating inappropriate behavior, (2) ignoring mildly inappropriate behavior, and (3) initiating a sequence of procedures and consequences for prolonged or excessively inappropriate behavior. (SBH)

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Joan S. Klein

SLBP Teacher

Highland Park Jr. High School

975 Snelling Ave. So.

St. Paul, Minnesota

55116

home address:

1787 Pinehurst Ave.

St. Paul, Minnesota

55116

(tel.) 612-698-0215

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WORKSHOP PRESENTATION - FOR WORKSHOP I

CEC CONFERENCE
ON THE SERIOUSLY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED

Joan S. Klein
Responsibility Resource Room (3R)
Highland Park Jr. High School
St. Paul, Mn.

August 13, 1980

RESPONSIBILITY RESOURCE ROOM

The 3R program at Highland Park Junior High in St. Paul consists of an SLBP teacher, an Educational Assistant, a Clerical Aide, a half time Social Worker, and 15 students in grades 7-9 who have been IEP'd into our program. Our students' presenting problem is maladaptive school behavior. Most of them have been described as emotionally disturbed. After entering our program, these students are assigned, by me, to from 1-4 hours a day in the 3R classroom. They remain in as many mainstream classes as they can handle, and the goal is to increase mainstream success and eventually return to all or nearly all regular classes. In this presentation, I intend to describe first of all the 3R classroom procedures at some length, and then briefly the monitored mainstream classes and the relation of the 3R program to the school as a whole. I will conclude with some slides and transparencies which I hope will make our program more real to you. I will welcome questions at the end.

The atmosphere in the 3R classroom is quiet, calm, warm, but business-like, where each student knows exactly what to do and what is expected of him. It takes a great deal of effort and planning to maintain this neutral environment - one which is not punishment, but certainly not preferable to regular classes. It becomes a status symbol in our room to take a lot of mainstream classes and we reinforce this. When our students complain about not getting regular classroom perks, like the last 5 minutes to talk, or interacting with other students or field trips or movies, etc., we explain that they <u>will</u> have these privileges when they are in mainstream classes.

Student time in the 3R classroom is totally individualized. Each student has his own carrel, which belongs to him whether he is in 3R or not, and he works independently of every other 3R student.

Upon coming into his 3R class, his folder for that hour is on his carrel with an assignment sheet on the front ot it, and he works on the next assignment on the sheet while we walk around and give help as needed. Every ½ hour we give points (which I will explain later). Direct teaching of basic academic skills comprises most of the activity in the room. Other academic activities include help with mainstream class work and homework. Most of our students are in need of intensive remedial work in Reading skills and comprehension, Writing skills, Spelling, and Basic Math. Those students who do not need remediation use the mainstream class curriculum and texts in our room. We also use the time in our room for non-academic purposes relating to school behavior. With individual students, we discuss and plan ways of handling social or behavior problems in mainstream classes, in the halls and lunchroom and on the bus. We schedule in activities geared to reinforce and support a student's strengths and interests, such as Art, electronics or storywriting, and sometimes activities which are just meant to be a break in the long school day. We also use 3R time for group and individual counseling with Mr. Johnson.

The primary treatment approach in 3R focuses on managing the conditions under which the student attends school. We have established a very explicit behavior monitoring and reinforcement plan which includes an overall point system, use of contracts, and social and concrete reinforcers. Every Thursday I have an individual conference with each 3R student in which together we review his Behavior Goals for the week, go over all of his Daily Report Cards for the week, and make or evaluate contracts. Then we add up his points to determine a weekly letter grade for each of his 3R classes and also record these points on his Bank Card. The grades and a summary of his problems or accomplishments in mainstream classes are put in a form letter which we mail to his parents each week. On Friday, if he has turned in at least 3 DRC's during the week, he can use the points on his Bank Card to shop. Students generally buy free time (up to an hour) or food. We have games, puzzles, art materials, cards, tapes to listen to (or they can bring their own), etc. to use during time purchased. Food includes the usual sweets plus whatever nutritious food we can get them to buy. We did have luck this year with juice, popcorn (cooked

in the room so they can smell it), and crackers with peanut butter, cheese, or meat.

The Behavior Management system we use in the 3R room consists of: 1) setting up an environment which avoids generating inappropriate behavior, 2) ignoring mildly inappropriate behavior, and 3) a sequence of procedures and consequences for prolonged or excessively inappropriate behavior. I can roughly outline this sequence, but I must emphasize that it is not rigid. We alter it if circumstances demand that. The sequence then is: 1) Do Nothing Time (no points earned but no consequences if behavior is otherwise appropriate); 2) 5 minute Time Out at your desk to get yourself together - no points earned, no other consequences of behavior is OK, or 5 minute Time Out at a screened off Time Out area in room if student needs to be away from others - again no points, no other consequences; 3) Dead Time - student is informed he is on Dead Time - the time and his initials are placed on the board; the student does not earn points - plus he has to pay back the number of minutes he was on Dead Time after school. When he returns to work appropriately, his name and the number of minutes owed after school are recorded on the board. Dead Time of more than 10 minutes, however, may be judged to be an inappropriate consequence. Judgement must be used as to whether it will be effective or not before placing the student on Dead Time. If it is judged that it may not be appropriate (because, for instance, the student is too out of control to respond), the student may instead be removed from the room to sit in a neutral place. (We have cultivated several of these in the school, such as the Dean's office, the Special Ed facilitators office, etc. These people are aware of the neutral environment we expect. At the beginning of the next hour, the student may return and try again. This time is not owed after school. The student is made aware that the only time we will call an administrator to handle his problem (by suspending him and asking him to return with his parents, usually) is if he refuses to leave the room with me to sit in a neutral place. Thus he sees clearly that it is to his advantage to leave with me. We only needed to call an administrator twice during the entire school year.

Further 3R Behavior Management strategies include: assessing 5 minute after school Penalties for swearing, put downs, and inappropriate Hands-On other students or equipment. We also require students to pay back after school, time spent during class using the lavatory, and they pay back tardiness (by the minute). We have a separate system for paying back skipped days or classes. We keep a log of all these problems, by the way, and find it invaluable.

Going on to our monitored mainstream procedures: It is stressed to our students that this is their goal; this is what they are striving for. Students can earn more rewards for appropriate behavior in mainstream classes than in 3R. We give intensive help to a student to keep him in his mainstream classes. We carefully arrange his schedule so that he has classes and teachers he has a chance to succeed with, we help with classwork, we monitor behavior in that class. We maintain communication with the teacher, monitor homework and communicate frequently with parent, teacher, and student regarding homework obligations. We also allow our classroom to be used as a time-out area for mainstream teachers to utilize for our 3R students, and we have found, incidentally, that rather than abusing this, mainstream teachers don't use it enough. Although I've described the 3R classroom procedures at more length, I do think I spend the majority of my time working with our students and the staff on their <u>mainstream</u> class problems.

The final thing I'd like to talk about is the relation of the 3R room to the entire school. Two things stand out. One is the importance of reducing the stigma attached to a room for behavior problem and emotionally disturbed students, and the other is the involvement of the 3R staff in the total school situation. First of all, the stigma: we have gone to lengths to keep our room open to and interesting to, all of the students in the school. They come in before and after school and between classes to use our games, cards and puzzles, or sometimes just to talk to us. We have helped to resolve numerous minor school problems for mainstream students. Our Homeroom is made up almost entirely of regular students. We have a policy of leaving our door open at all times during class so that students and staff can see that nothing unusual goes on in our

room. To the contrary, it is one of the quietest rooms in the building. We keep a pet hamster, and other students are welcome to come in and handle or feed it between classes. We've even had regular students bring things to leave in our room. We have found that this does indeed help to reduce the stigma of the room.

Secondly, the relationship between the 3R staff and the rest of the staff. We have found it essential that we become actively involved with all of the school staff - the counselors, the social workers, the Youth Advocate, the nurse, the Administrative Team, the psychologist, the Aides, the other special education people (and we have a large number of programs in our school), and especially the mainstream teachers. These people all deal with 3R students and maintaining an ongoing relationship with them is vital to the success of the program. We need their cooperation and help. We have found it helpful, too, to present an inservice workshop for the faculty prior to the start of every other school year. We have also found that it is essential to be available for help to teachers who have 3R students in their classrooms. It's also helpful to spend some time in the social milieu of the school. I get a lot accomplished in the staff lounge with teachers, even if I don't get a lot of lounging done. Last of all, we have acted on the belief that the 3R staff has to do its fair share of the garbage work in the school. We chaperone and take bus duty with everyone else.

In conclusion, I would like to quote J. Lee Wiederholt, in his book THE RESOURCE TEACHER, who says that one should aim toward developing a resource program for the school rather than solely a resource room. I haven't succeeded totally in doing that, but it is my goal.

It's impossible, of course, to completely describe the 3R program in the time allotted, but I think the slides and transparencies we made last year will help.

List of transparencies:

1. Referial Evaluation Sheet (2 pages)
2. Notice to Mainstream Teacher
3. Mainstream Progress Sheet
4. Weekly letter to parent
5. Worksheet for class folder
6. Contract
7. Daily Report Card
8. Weekly Point Chart
9. Notice of Student Withdrawal from mainstream class

Also available:

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